

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-11 EB-07 COME-00 SIL-01 LAB-04

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 SAJ-01

ACDA-05 /090 W

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R 061903Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8809

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMCONSUL BELFAST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SP, UK, EEC

SUBJECT: THE TUC AND SPAIN

SUMMARY - TUC INTEREST IN SPAIN HAS TAKEN A NEW TURN AS
A RESULT OF GENERAL FRANCO'S DEATH. TUC WILL CONSIDER
NEXT MONTH THE FEASIBILITY OF SENDING A DELEGATION TO
SPAIN WHICH WOULD VERY LIKELY INCLUDE JACK JONES, CHAIR-
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MAN OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE, AND LEN MURRAY, GENERAL

SECRETARY. IN ADDITION A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF TUC GENERAL COUNCIL MEMBERS ARE AMONG SPONSORS OF A CONFERENCE ON SPAIN TO BE HELD IN LONDON ON FEBRUARY 14. END SUMMARY.

1. THREE MEMBERS OF THE UGT -- THE SPANISH TRADE UNION IN EXILE -- (QRS. CASTELLANOS, REDONDO AND DUARTE) MET WITH THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON FEBRUARY 2 AND INVITED IT TO SEND A DELEGATION TO SPAIN. AT FIRST, THERE WAS SOME NEGATIVE REACTION FROM THE COMMITTEE INCLUDING JONES -- ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE -- BECAUSE A VISIT COULD BE SEEN AS TANTAMOUNT TO TUC ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRESENT SPANISH REGIME BEFORE IT ENACTED ANY REAL TRADE UNION OR OTHER DEMOCRATIC REFORMS. UGT REPRESENTATIVES ASSURED THEIR HOSTS, HOWEVER, THAT A CAREFULLY CIRCUMSCRIBED VISIT WOULD NOT HAVE THIS EFFECT. THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE THEN DECIDED TO CONSIDER THE MATTER WHEN IT MEETS NEXT IN MARCH. (THE UGT DELEGATION ALSO INVITED THE TUC TO ATTEND ITS CONGRESS IN BRUSSELS DURING APRIL -- AN INVITATION WHICH WAS ACCEPTED.)

2. IN A FEBRUARY 5 PRESS CONFERENCE JONES INDICATED THAT HE, MURRAY AND OTHER LEADERS OF THE TUC MIGHT VISIT SPAIN SHORTLY. (HIS OFFICE INFORMED US TODAY THAT HE HAS NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO DO SO, BUT HIS REMARKS SEEM TO INDICATE THAT A DECISION BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE TO SEND A DELEGATION IS NOW QUITE LIKELY.) JONES TOLD REPORTERS THAT THE PRESENT REGIME HAS FAILED TO ENACT GENUINE REFORMS. HE SAID THAT AS A MINIMUM, THE TUC BELIEVES THERE SHOULD BE RESTORATION OF FREE ELECTIONS, RIGHT OF ASSEMBLY, FREE PRESS, RELEASE OF POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION PRISONERS, LEGAL RECOGNITION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS AND OF POLITICAL PARTIES. MOREOVER, HE SAID THAT THE TUC WOULD PRESS THE UK GOVERNMENT TO BRING PRESSURE ON THE SPANISH REGIME AND TO OPPOSE ITS MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY UNTIL IT EFFECTED THESE REFORMS.

3. IN THE DISCUSSION WITH THE TUC INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE THE UGT DELEGATION ALSO EMPHASIZED -- WE ARE TOLD -- ITS BELIEF IN A UNIFIED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN SPAIN
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WHICH WOULD INCLUDE ALL TENDENCIES. THE SPANIARDS DID NOT ASK FOR ANY SPECIFIC HELP, I.E., THEY DID NOT ASK FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. THEY SAID THINGS WERE CHANGING IN THEIR NATIVE LAND, BUT THEY DID NOT DISCUSS THIS IN ANY DETAILED WAY. THEY DID NOT CONDEMN THE NEW REGIME, OUR SOURCE ADDED, AND IN FACT APPEARED HOPEFUL ABOUT THE FUTURE.

4. THE SPECIAL CONFERENCE ON SPAIN TO BE HELD IN LONDON ON FEBRUARY 14 HAS AS ITS CO-ORGANIZER WILL PAYNTER, A VETERAN COMMUNIST AND FORMER LEADER OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINEWORKERS, AND RAY BUCKTON, THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE LOCOMOTIVE FIREMEN AND ENGINEERS. BUCKTON TOLD US THAT AMONG THE CONFERENCE SPONSORS IS A BROAD CROSS-SECTION OF THE TUC LEADERSHIP INCLUDING 20 MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL. DAVID BASNETT, FRANK CHAPPLE AND TOM JACKSON ARE AMONG THE SPONSORS. THEY ALL ARE EITHER MODERATE OR RIGHT-WING. BUCKTON ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE INSPIRATION FOR THE CONFERENCE CAME FROM PAYNTER WHO IS -- LIKE JONES -- AN EX-MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR.

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5. BUCKTON ALSO SAID THAT ONE OF THE MAIN PURPOSES OF THE CONFERENCE IS TO DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH SPANISH WORKERS FOR A UNIFIED TRADE UNION MOVEMENT. TO THAT END, HE SAID, ALL ELEMENTS IN SPAIN (REPRESENTED IN THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM AND DEMOCRATIC JUNTA) WOULD BE ASKED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHOOSE A 10-INDIVIDUAL DELEGATION. BRITISH DELEGATES WILL BE ALL TRADE UNIONISTS, ALTHOUGH POLITICAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHERS, INCLUDING MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE FREE TO ATTEND AS OBSERVERS. SPEAKERS WILL INCLUDE JONES AND MICHAEL FOOT, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EMPLOYMENT. (IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE COMMUNIST "MORNING STAR" STATES: "THOSE WANTING TO ATTEND SHOULD APPLY FOR CREDENTIALS TO MR. PAYNTER AT THE NUM HEAD-QUARTERS IN EUSTON ROAD, LONDON." THIS PROCEDURE MIGHT HELP TO ASSURE THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF LEFT-WINGERS ATTEND.)

6. COMMENT: OUR SOURCE INSISTS THAT THE TUC HAS NOT COME TO ANY HARD AND FAST CONCLUSION ABOUT WHICH GROUP OR GROUPS IN SPAIN ARE MOST REPRESENTATIVE OF THE WORKERS. HE DOES NOT KNOW, HE SAID, HOW REPRESENTATIVE THE UGT IS CURRENTLY SINCE ITS LEADERSHIP IS FAIRLY OLD AND HAS BEEN LONG IN EXILE. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT BECAUSE OF JONES' INTENSE PERSONAL INTEREST IN SPAIN, THE TRANSPORT LEADER'S INFLUENCE ON TUC POLICY IN THIS AREA IS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE. HE IMPLIED THAT THE TUC IS WAITING FOR THE DUST TO SETTLE IN SPAIN BEFORE IT TAKES ANY KIND OF DECISIVE ACTION. SENDING THE FIRST TUC DELEGATION TO THAT COUNTRY SINCE THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR WOULD CONSTITUTE THE FIRST STEP IN THE FORMULATION OF A TUC RECOGNITION POLICY.

SPIERS

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Message Attributes

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